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ABSTRACT

A fourth-grade teacher, who was employed to provide a special enrichment program to minority children with above-average academic abilities, designed a practicum to increase parent involvement in her classroom. A parent volunteer questionnaire and an activities survey form were developed to determine the level and nature of parent interest. A parent translator provided information about school events to non-English-speaking parents, and encouraged parents to speak in the classroom. Special incentives were used to increase parent participation. Seminars were planned to update program information, and workshops were conducted to advise and guide parents. In addition, parent-teacher conferences were conducted to inform parents and enlist cooperation. Results suggested that the level of parent involvement was increased by: (1) persuading parents to attempt an activity; (2) finding the right activity for parents; (3) using parents in such roles as translator and caller; (4) providing classroom incentives for children who helped to enlist parent volunteers; (5) involving all children in activities; (6) using community resources; (7) holding positive parent-teacher conferences; (8) maintaining nonbiased opinions about parents; and (9) making sure that parents felt needed. Program evaluation data indicated that the intervention had positive results. (RH)

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UTILIZING THE RESOURCES OF PARENT VOLUNTEERS TO INCREASE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN A FOURTH GRADE CLASS

ED310855

by

Hui Fang Huang (Angie) Su

Cluster #30

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A Practicum I Report presented to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood in Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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This practicum report was submitted by Hui Fang Huang Su under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

July 5, 1989

Date of Final Approval of Report

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ABSTRACT

Utilizing the Resources of Parent Volunteers to Increase Parental Involvement in a Fourth Grade Class. Su, Hui Fang H., 1989: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood.
Descriptors: Classroom Volunteers/Special Talents/Working Parents/Special Programs/Single Parents/Parent-Teacher Partnership/Parent Participation/Parent-Teacher Conferences/Parent Role/Teacher Role/Community Resources/Parent Speakers

The writer designed a plan to utilize the resources of parent volunteers to increase parent involvement in a fourth grade class. Due to low socio-economic status, parents in this fourth grade class showed low interest toward school and classroom activities. Parents often found excuses not to be involved in their child's educational process. The goal is to increase parental involvement and to elicit parent volunteers in our class and school activities.

The writer designed a parent volunteer questionnaire and an activities survey form to determine parent interest. The practicum project utilized a parent translator to help inform non-English speaking parents of school events, and encouraged parents to speak in our classroom in order to build their self-confidence and improve students' behavior. Special incentive was used to entice parent participation. Seminars were planned to update program information. Workshops were conducted to advise and guide parents. Parent-teacher conferences were conducted to inform parents and to enlist cooperation. And evaluation instruments were developed and used.

The results of the practicum were clearly evidenced by the teacher evaluation of the data collected on the parent attendance and activity survey forms, attendance record sheet of the seminars and the workshops, and by the number of parents signed up to serve in our class and school activities. The children whose parents were involved had a positive attitude toward learning. From less than 50% of parent participation last year, an increase of 30% of parent participation in class and school activities was evidenced.

Chapter I: Introduction

Description of Work Setting and Community

The setting for the writer's practicum was an inner-city school located in a poor neighborhood. The school had a professional staff of forty-four regular and support program teachers, twenty-four paraprofessionals and two administrators. Seven hundred thirty students were enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade. The entire student population of this school consisted of Black, Haitian, Hispanic, Asian and White. However, Black Americans made up the major portion of this school's students.

On each grade level there were four to six different classes. Fourth grade was comprised of four separate classes. The District's Unified Curriculum served as the basis for instruction in communication skills, mathematics, science, art, music, physical education and computer literacy. The school had programs which met the needs of exceptional students, such as: Gifted, Speech Therapy, Specific Learning Disabilities, English For Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Potentially Gifted (SOI), and Chapter I All Day Basic Skills. At that time, involvement of parents, volunteers and community consisted of career awareness activities, fine arts productions, lectures, exhibits, field trips and sponsorship of unique school programs.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

This past school year, the writer taught a special enrichment program for minority children with above average academic abilities. Upon the recommendations of the student's third grade teacher, based on previous academic performance and teacher observation, a student was tested for this program by the writer, using The Structure of the Intellect Test of Learning Abilities. To qualify for the program, the student needed to score above sixth grade level in five out of nine areas of the Learning Abilities Test. The class was limited to sixteen children who will enter fourth grade in the upcoming school year.

The ratio of children per teacher in this special program was sixteen children to one teacher and one full-time aide.

This past school year, the writer's class consisted of eight Black Americans whose native language was English, five Hispanic children whose native language was Spanish, one African whose native language was Arabic and one Asian whose native language was also Arabic.

Many of the parents in this class depended on welfare for their daily survival. Many children also resided in a single parent environment. The students in this class were

bused from six neighboring schools. Seven out of fifteen students had a family income below the poverty level, based on the number of students on free or reduced lunch.

As the special enrichment program teacher, the writer's job was to select candidates and to provide regular fourth grade instruction as well as enrichment designed to further develop their creative talents and intellectual abilities, and help them reach their true potential.

Chapter II: Study of the Problem

Problem Description

The writer feels that when parents are involved in the process of education, their children are likely to do better in school. A student's achievement may be related to the increased sense of control he feels over his own destiny when he sees his parents actively involved in his school.

In the spring of each school year, the special enrichment program that the writer is teaching offers two informational seminars. Last year, less than 50% of the parents in this special enrichment class attended these seminars. Moreover, the parents' attitude towards school and classroom activities was poor. The following are just a few examples of parents' unwillingness to participate in their children's educational process.

1. In this special enrichment class, field trips were scheduled frequently. Due to the lack of funding, parents were asked to serve as drivers on these field trips. There was only one parent volunteer driver in seven field trips. 2. In January 1989, art work by eight out of sixteen students from this class was selected to be on display in one of the county's art museums. Only two parents and two students attended the reception and preview at the art gallery. 3. During career week, in which all parents are

welcome to come and talk about their line of work to help children become exposed to different kinds of jobs, none of the parents in this special enrichment class volunteered to come and speak. 4. Parent/teacher conferences were initiated mainly by the teacher. Every effort was made on the part of the teacher to meet with parents of children that are behind in their work or have behavior problems in the classroom. The parents of these children have made little attempt to attend these parent/teacher conferences. The parents' attitude toward their children's educational process was poor. Only a few parents in this special enrichment class participated in the classroom activities or attended parent informational seminars.

Problem Documentation

The problem was lack of parental involvement in the special enrichment program's seminars and activities. Parents' enthusiasm for the total school program was low. In the case of the Spring Informational Seminar, the writer has observed that only seven families out of sixteen attended. The writer has also observed the poor turnout of parents at the art and science exhibits in the school and at the art gallery. From the school volunteer sign-up sheet, the record shows only a few parents that signed up to drive on field trips. The 1987-1989 attendance records and parent volunteer sign-up forms for the seminars and classroom activities indicate that less than 50% of the parents attended and participated.

Causative Analysis

In an attempt to understand why parents did not attend informational seminars, the writer called eight parents on the telephone who did not attend the Spring Informational Seminar and in each case said, "We missed you at the meeting last night and were wondering why you couldn't make it. We would like to do whatever we can to increase attendance." The writer got the following replies:

"The meetings are usually boring."

"There was a great special on television that I didn't want to miss."

"I didn't know that there was a meeting."

"I had to work last night."

"I don't have a car."

"I don't speak much English"

"It's too dangerous to go out at night."

The writer feels that the following were the contributing factors to the problem of lack of parental involvement in this special enrichment class:

1. Most of the parents in this class worked at hourly-wage jobs and they would probably lose pay if they took time off.

2. Some of the parents did not understand the value and importance of attending these seminars. Parents often felt

that they were butting in, or that the kids were embarrassed if they got too involved.

3. A number of social factors have hampered parent involvement in this class, including one-parent families; a large number of working mothers; the demand on parents' time, and the greater complexities of the education process, which left some parents unsure of whether they were qualified to offer opinions, let alone help when it comes to educating their children.

4. The majority of parents had high school or lower education. Some were illiterate. Past seminars and activities were too difficult for them to comprehend.

5. It was not always the case that parents do not want to become involved. Sometimes parents have been reluctant to interfere where they may not have been wanted. Most of the time the message of past seminars and activities did not reach parents. There was poor communication between school and home.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

According to the literature, throughout educational history there have always been many attempts to increase parent involvement in schools. This need for parent involvement in schools has increased rapidly due to our fast-moving, changing society. The literature provides a survey of the number of divorced families and the conditons of living in the United States, as well as a survey of both parent participation and non-participation. The literature reveals the following as the causes of the problem: (1) the increased number of single parents; (2) teachers being insensitive to the needs of low-income minority families; (3) lack of stimulation on the part of parents due to low-income environments; (4) teachers not getting enough funding to conduct classroom activities, and the need for community resources; (5) constant job change providing an unstable environment; and (6) social incompatibility among students different levels of (family income).

The literature suggests that learning can be school-based, home-based or community-based. Therefore, learning can be achieved to its ultimate level if we incorporate home, school and community resources.

According to Swap (1987) due to school budget cuts, teachers are faced with difficult working conditions. The budget cuts decrease teachers' status and decrease community

support. The author points out the growing problems of divorce, separation, unemployment, isolation and troubled children which have increased the need for parents and teachers to work jointly for the benefit of the children.

A poll taken by the NEA found that 90% of American teachers, at all grade levels, believe that home-school working relationship would be beneficial for everyone involved. 80% of the parents were willing to attend at least one school activity per month in relation to improving their children's behavior and performance in school. Swap used the findings of a six-state survey to argue that most teachers felt that collaboration between parents and teachers is poor. The author feels that the benefits of parent involvement are tangible. They can improve students' overall academic performance, parents' and teachers' attitude toward each other and increase parent contribution to the total school program.

Lombana (1983) states that parents and teachers lose the support of the other due to mistrust and miscommunication. Teachers blame discipline problems on the way parents are raising their children, while many parents view teachers as uncaring individuals who teach only because they cannot find other jobs they are qualified for. Due to socio-economic factors, the communication between parents and their children is decreasing, hence the interaction between parents and teachers decreases as well. Lombana says children learn

primarily through imitation and when their parents are not available to them as role models, children turn to their peers or television rather than teachers.

The benefits of home/school working together are many. Based on a number of studies done by other researchers, the findings show that by increasing communication between home and school, both parents' and teachers' attitude toward each other has changed from negative to positive. The students do better in school; teachers have fewer problems with students; parents are more likely to support school programs; and the community is more likely to offer financial and moral support for school-based programs.

Parenting, according to Berger (1987), is one of the most important roles in our society today. Parents and the community should work together to benefit children from infancy through young adulthood. In referencing the works of Hunt, Bloom and Coleman, with the concern over the child's intellectual development, Berger argues that parents play a major role in the child's intellectual development. Parents who participated in an early education program gained a greater insight to their child's emotional, social, intellectual development and needs. Parents took a more positive approach in communicating and disciplining their children. The author derived her opinion from the research work of Skells, Spitz, Bowlby, Ainsworth and others, in studies of human attachment which emphasize the importance of

a parent figure. The studies involving children at all age levels also show that parental involvement in their children's educational process made a difference in the outcome of children's learning.

Griffore and Boger (1986) suggest that the lack of parental involvement stems from lack of programs for parents helping them to become educators of their own children. The authors believe that each parent, child and family is unique. Parents are the primary educators throughout the first three years of a chid's life. Therefore, programs that will help parents to be effective educators not only are very important to a specific child, but beneficial to the entire family. The most effective educational programs for a child is based upon the individual values, beliefs and attitudes of the indivudual child and parent.

While it is important to train parents as educators, there are some limits in their education roles, says Griffore and Bubolz (1986). Neither the school nor the family can accept the entire responsibility for educating a child. The home or the school alone cannot meet all the needs of an individual child, hence they need to support each other and work complimentarily in an interconnected way. This will not only increase the effective results in the educational process for the child, but will also increase cooperation and coordination between home and school.

Welch and Tisdale (1986) state that in order for parents

and teachers to work together to create a good learning environment for children, they must first learn to understand each other's roles, responsibilities, problems and concerns. Some parents are afraid of teachers and teachers are troubled by parents. Such feelings, Welch and Tisdale says stemmed from lack of understanding and communication between parents and teachers. Poor communication and cooperation between parents and teachers is responsible for the lack of parental involvement at school. The authors suggest many ways to improve teacher-parent cooperation and communication in order to improve parent participation in their children's educational program. Parents and teachers usually don't communicate with each other unless there is a problem. The authors point out the fact that research shows that when parents and teachers work together, children's achievement scores rise, self-concepts improve, and grades are better.

For Simpson (1982), many factors account for the lack of parent involvement in the school, such as: 700 percent increase in the number of children affected by divorce since the beginning of the century; 40 percent of all children born today will be raised by a single parent; 15 percent of all children are illegitimate; and 50 percent of all mothers with school-age children are working full time.

Simpson says, more and more parents and children spend more time outside their homes than inside. Therefore as educators, we must recognize the changing family pattern and

develop educational programs that would better serve children and parents so that parents will be more involved in the school's programs and activities and their children's educational process at home and at school.

According to Simpson, schools should accommodate the increasing number of minority families. Miscommunication with the minority parents, including those with different languages, cultural practices, and values contributes to non-participation of parents in school programs, activities and students' educational process. The teacher should make an effort to relate to these minority parents in the same way as they would with non-minority parents. Teachers should be more sensitive to the needs of all children regardless of race, culture, religion, social status, sex, cognitive ability or physical limitations.

Mcloughlin (1987) suggests that insufficient parent-teacher conferences are the cause of low parent involvement. With the extremely low number of parent-teacher conferences in our schools today have not only helped parents develop misconceptions about the school and the teacher, but also help the teacher create the wrong impression about some parents and families. Through parent conferences, parents will develop more confidence and a desire to cooperate, and hence become more involved with their children's school. Almost all parents come to conferences because they care about their children and would like to hear about them.

According to Mcloughlin, both parents and teachers think that learning does not occur at home or at school alone, but it occurs in both places. Since both parents and teachers want the best for the children, conferencing would be the ideal way to close the gap between home and school. Parents are naturally curious about how their children are doing in school. Conferencing will help them satisfy this curiosity. The lack of parent-teacher conferences creates miscommunication between parents and teachers. Conferencing is a two-way communication. It benefits not only the parents, but teachers as well. Parents can help teachers as much as teachers can help parents.

According to Otterbourg (1986), there is a need for parent and community involvement in our schools. The downfall of American education triggers educators to seek additional funding, equipment, materials and human resources in their community as part of their effort to improve American education. As partners, the school, parents and the community can work together and create some school improvement projects. The advantages of school teaming up with parents and the community outweigh the disadvantages. The author says the lack of school improvement projects are the major contributing factors to the downfall of the American educational system. For school improvement, there are many projects in which educators can involve the community and parents. Projects such as staff development, enrichment programs, basic skills projects, career education

activities and many other programs will have no future without the support of the parents and the community. Local businesses can donate space, time, and money. Parets need to be more involved by donating time and knowledge. Joint effort between the school, parents and the community will enhance the total positive learning environment for the children, and at the same time increase parent participation in the school program.

Chapter III: Anticipated Outcomes and Evaluation Instruments

Goals and Expectations

The most important goal parents and educators might share is educational achievement for the students. In this writer's opinion, the most effective school improvement toward this goal is that of parent involvement. The writer's first goal was to get the parents involved in our orientation and follow-up seminars, and classroom activities. The seminars took place in the spring of this school year.

A variety of classroom activities took place throughout the year. These activities include: art shows, science exhibits, plays, field trips, and Academic Olympic competitions. The parents were invited to attend the seminars and activities. They have voluntarily responded to the attendance survey form and attended the orientation and follow-up seminars. The parents have also voluntarily signed up to work or participate in the school and classroom activities. They have participated in parent-teacher conferences, attended a workshop, and served as volunteers in school and classroom activities as: resource persons, speakers, tutors, drivers, and field trip planners.

Behavioral Objectives

With the conclusion of a three-month implementation period, certain positive objectives were achieved. These objectives are listed below:

1. 80% to 90% of the parents will respond on an attendance survey form.

2. 80% to 90% of the parents will attend our orientation informational seminar and follow-up informational seminar.

3. Parents will sign up to serve in eight out of ten school and classroom activities.

Measurement of Objectives

At the Orientation seminar, parents were asked to sign their names on the Orientation Informational Seminar Parent/Guardian Sign-in Sheet (Appendix C). The purpose of the sign-in sheet was to keep track of the number of parents that attended the seminar. During this seminar, the teacher conducted a parent survey by asking those parents who did not respond on the parent survey questionnaires sent to their homes, to complete an activities survey form. The questionnaires previously sent home were the Parent Conference Survey Form (Appendix A), which helped the teacher determine the most favorable time for parents to attend parent-teacher conferences; and the Activities Survey Form (Appendix B), which requested parents to rank school activities by the order of preference. All parents were informed of the Parent Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet for classroom activities (Appendix F). The Parent Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet consisted of twenty classroom and school activities. For each activity, there were three spaces provided for three parents to sign up to serve. The parents signed up to volunteer on twenty activities out of the twenty activities provided. A Field Trip Driver Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet, consisted of two spaces per month from September to June allowing two parent volunteers, for parents to sign up to serve as drivers.

During parent-teacher conferences, the teacher recorded names of parents and information concerning the conferences on the Parent-Teacher Conference Attendance Record Form (Appendix K). It was at this time that parents were asked to sign up for the parent workshop, on the Parent Workshop Sign-Up sheet. At this workshop, the parents filled out a parent checklist regarding learning at home and at school (Appendix O) in order to help the parents evaluate their relationship toward their children and to help the teacher use the collected data to advise parents how to be effective parents. The checklist consisted of two sections, with the first section concentrating on learning at home (including eighteen questions), and the second section on school-related learning, which had nineteen questions. There was also a parent sign-in sheet for the Follow-Up Informational Seminar (Appendix D).

All parent participation data were evaluated and recorded using teacher-designed evaluation instruments (Appendices H, I, J, & P). Appendix H is the teacher evaluation instrument on parent activities survey. Parents were identified by numbers in a row across the top portion of the instrument and the activities were listed on the leftmost column. Parent choices were represented by letters, with letters A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H representing first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth choices respectively. Appendix I is the teacher evaluation instrument on parent activities volunteer survey. The

parents were also referred to as 'P' and a number. Twenty activities were listed on the leftmost column of the paper while the parent numbers were listed across the top. The parent who volunteered (Mom or Dad), was indicated by the letter M or D in the appropriate box where the volunteered activity and parent number met. This instrument also identified single-parent families by substituting an asterisk for the missing parent. The teacher evaluation for parent drivers (Appendix P), used a similar approach to the above-mentioned instruments. When a parent signed up to drive for a particular field trip in a particular month, an 'X' was placed in the box where the month and the parent number met. The only difference between this instrument and the previous instruments was that there was a limit of two parent volunteers per month. The last teacher evaluation instrument was the seminar and workshop attendance record. If a parent was present at the seminar or workshop under the parent number and across from the event a 'P' was marked representing present, and an 'N' was marked for those parents who did not attend these events. The 'N' represents no show. This instrument also measured whether one or both parents attended the event.

After reviewing data recorded on the teacher evaluation instrument (Appendices H, I, J, & P), the writer analyzed the data collected and figured out the percentage of parent participants for ease of understanding in each of the following activities:

1. For the Orientation and Follow-Up seminars, and the parent workshop, more than twelve names appeared on the sign-up record sheets, the objective of 80% parent attendance was achieved.

2. On the teacher evaluation instruments for parent driver sign-up sheet and activities survey form, twenty out of twenty activities were chosen by parents, the objective of eight out of ten activities on which the parents volunteered to serve was achieved.

The final results and the data collected was presented in chart and report format. The charts (1.) indicate which parent was the most active participant in the school and classroom activities; (2.) show which parent (Mom or Dad) attended the activities more frequently; (3.) show which school and classroom activities were favored by the parents; (4.) indicate the event at which parents were most likely to help out; (5.) show which events were attended by most parents; and (6.) show single-parent families.

Chapter IV: Solution Strategy

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

According to Swap (1983), there are four possible solutions to improve parent involvement. Swap says, (1.) The teacher should create opportunities for positive parent-teacher contact through activities. They should let the parents generate ideas for activities that would be enjoyable and appropriate for them. Teachers should provide advance notice and offer incentives for the activities. (2.) Teachers should make conferences more productive. Since both parents and teachers are busy with multiple demands, each should try to understand the time constraints experienced by the other. Teachers should allow sufficient time for notifying parents and planning for the physical environment of the conference. (3.) Teachers should find out what parents really want and plan accordingly. (4.) Teachers should make sure that the conferences are productive by making notices more attractive, allowing enough time, creating a suitable atmosphere and increasing communication skills.

Lombana (1983) shares some of Swap's view. Lombana states that teachers should initiate parent conferences. The conferences must be based on a rapport between parents and teachers in which they learn from one another and exchange

ideas and in which each is confident and cooperative. Teachers should help parents prepare for conferences by outlining the conferences and by planning in advance so that both parties will be able to attend. Lombana further states that counseling with parents and families, when needed, can serve as another solution to improving parent involvement and parent-teacher communication.

A book pertaining to the issue of parents as partners in education was written by Berger (1987). This author says understanding parents' feelings and concerns provides the basis for creating effective home-school relationships. Parents may serve as policy makers, spectators, teachers of their own children, volunteers and paid employees. Berger says that parents must be supported in home-school involvements. There should be a diversified school-based program in order to meet the special needs of individual families. In many instances the school provides a home-based program in which the selected home visitor can have a great effect on the total educational program.

In the case of exceptional children, Berger suggests many ways in working with parents of the exceptional child. Parents and teachers are effective forces in influencing the life of the exceptional child. They should work cooperatively to find out the needs of the exceptional child.

Griffore and Boger (1988) are concerned with child-rearing in the home and school. The authors feel that

the parents should serve as teachers, as each parent and child is unique. Using home as a learning center can increase a child's learning over the school alone. Parents acting as teachers benefit not only the child involved, but all children within the family. The impact on the children's affective and cognitive functioning is tremendous when parents serve as teachers.

Griffore and Bubolz (1986) also has definite ideas regarding family as educators. They feel that teachers should take parent and family into consideration in planning and designing a parent program. Family and school share the major responsibility for most learning, with slightly more emphasis toward the family, as most early learning starts at home.

Welch and Tisdale (1986) view communication and cooperation as the primary elements for effective working relationships between teachers and parents. Communication is the first and most important step in parent involvement. Teachers need to establish lines of communication through parent-teacher conferences in order to promote an effective program of involvement and communication. The authors feel that cooperation between teachers and parents can result in better educational programs for children. Teacher-parent cooperation can be defined as a process whereby teachers and parents work together for the ultimate benefit of the child.

Simpson (1982) suggests ways in dealing with the

minority exceptional child. Simpson says the teacher should be able to relate to a variety of parents, including those with different languages, cultural practices, and values. By doing so, the teacher will increase the probability of conferencing success. The author also talks about ways of dealing with single-parent families. Simpson states that the teacher can serve as a valuable stabilizing force for families undergoing changes. With a cooperative effort between parents and teachers, the long-term effect of these changes can be minimized.

Parent-Teacher Conferencing written by Mcloughlin (1987) emphasizes cooperative efforts between teachers and parents. Parent-teacher conferences are an important part of any communication process. It is the only way parents have for receiving information and knowledge of their children's program. In conducting parent-teacher conferences, several factors should be considered: (1.) Make every effort to make the parent feel comfortable and wanted. Teachers should remember that being in control at a meeting does not mean being in charge. (2.) Communicate with parents on their level. (3.) Be positive. (4.) Offer suggestions as to how parents can help their children. Most parents don't know how to provide best for their children educationally, and would welcome suggestions.

Parent involvement can take many different forms. Atterbourg (1986) suggests utilizing parents as partners.

The author has organized a program for starting a partnership, preparing for a partnership project, launching the partnership, and maintaining an extended successful partnership. A successful parent-teacher partnership can help stimulate and support staff development enrichment programs, basic skills projects, career education activities and many other projects that would not be possible, in light of lack of funding and budget cuts.

Description of Selected Solution

After citing possible solutions from the literature the writer feels that there are four possible solutions that can help to solve the problem of parental involvement in this fourth grade special enrichment class.

First, improve communication with the parents using parent questionnaires, newsletters, letters, local newspaper and telephone.

The use of parent questionnaires can facilitate the teacher to predetermine the most favorable time and type of activities parents prefer.

Through newsletters and letters, written in the parent's native language, the parents were notified of all the activities related to the program in the past, present and future. This helped stimulate parents' overall interest in their children's program.

Notify the local newspaper of any special class projects or events. Parents were more likely to be attracted to a well-publicized event. The wirter gave the parents a call before the special class activities, functions, seminars or conferences to remind parents to attend. In the event that a parent could not attend, he or she was informed by telephone as to the content of the event; thus communication between

parent and teacher was achieved.

Second, increase the number of parent-teacher conferences, emphasizing parents' thorough understanding of their children's program. The writer felt that a warm, caring atmosphere in the school would be the first step in parent-teacher conferences. The teacher's conference plan reflected acceptance of varied family structure and respect for the diverse cultures represented. The teacher listened to parent concerns and reached out to involve them in meaningful ways. In talking with the parents, the teacher explained the developmental and academic needs of a fourth grader, and clarified the content of the program. This helped parents understand that their children were unique and special.

Third, improve class activities and seminars by including special programs and activities such as: a tea party, a fund raising, music and art programs, health programs and using parents as resource persons or speakers. The special programs and activities were pre-selected by the parents on the parent questionnaire survey form. In the writer's opinion, when parents participated in a wide variety of activities, this kind of direct relationsip with their won children's achievements had a direct effect on student achievement.

Fourth, develop a workshop for parents, to train them to directly assist in their children's education. The intention

was for parents to see, first hand, what was going on and to improve education conditions for children in this fourth grade special enrichment class through better communications between parents and teachers. Beyond homework, the writer wanted parents to ask children questions about what was taking place in school. Rather than accepting short answers, such as 'we went to art today', the writer wanted the parents to probe, to go into more depth. Parents can be a vital asset to the educational process. The writer wanted their assistance, which they may not have realized until this workshop.

The writer tried to invite the parents, by way of telephone calls, invitations through the mail, and questionnaires brought home by students, to come and attend parent orientation and follow-up informational seminars; to initiate parent-teacher conferences in order for the parents to thoroughly understand their children's program; to initiate special programs and activities in order to develop a closer bond between home and school; and to develop workshop for parents in order to directly assist in their children's education.

The steps that the writer took were: (1) Sent out parent survey questionnaires to determine the most favorable time of visit and most preferred activities. (2) Sent out invitations by mail to the parents, designed by their own children, to invite them to the informational seminar. (3)

Invited parents to sign up to serve as volunteers for the class. (4) Invited parents to special functions such as: class play and skating party, science and art exhibits. (5) Set up parent-teacher conferences as often as needed to provide for better communication between parent and teacher and to provide individualized attention for each family. (6) Set up a parent workshop on ways for parents to assist their children with the learning process. (7) Invited parents to follow-up informational seminar.

Report of Action Taken

The projected implementation time line was 12 weeks from start to finish. Since most parents in this class had high school education or less, they felt inferior and overwhelmed by the word 'seminar' or 'school'. As part of the preliminary ground work before the implementation phase, the writer had the students design parent invitations and sent them home by mail. Parents were invited to the school to give talks about their jobs, in order to "break the ice" and to help build parents' self-confidence. Once the parents felt accepted, they were more likely to be involved with the school and their children's educational process.

In order to elicit, improve and increase parental involvement in this class, the writer felt that it was important to begin by sending home parent attendance survey forms to aid in determining the most favorable activities and preferred conference time for the parent.

It was explained to the students what the forms were about and how to fill them out, just in case the parents could not understand the instructions on how to fill them out. Students were offered an incentive to bring the forms back.

The parents were invited along with other professional speakers to come into our classroom to talk about their

careers. The writer was pleasently surprised by the number of parent speakers. Last year, parents were notified of special career-oriented activities through parent letters brought home by the students, and not one parent volunteered to speak. This year, the writer sent home parent letters, and called parents on the telephone to invite them to come to our class to speak. Four parents volunteered to speak about their careers, and through their contacts, the parents also arranged for other professional speakers to come to our class to speak. The children of the parents who came to speak were very proud and excited to have their parents talk to their classmates and all the students loved listening to someone talk about what they do for a living. Each talk lasted about an hour and the majority portion of the talk was answering the students' questions. As a result of these talks, the teacher and the parents who came became very close. The parents even offered to donate supplies and services whenever needed.

During the first week of the implementation phase, the parents of the new students were invited to the orientation informational seminar. The parents were notified of the seminar through parent letter sent to them by the project manager, and telephone call by the teacher. All parents were contacted, including Spanish-speaking parents. The teacher made every effort to communicate with them in Spanish. The seminar (Appendix L) was well received. Although not all of the parents came, those who did not attend the seminar made

an effort to visit the school and talk to the teacher to find out more about the program. While only 70% of the parents signed the attendance record sheet, the actual attendance by the parents, aunts, and grandparents was well over 80%. Some parents attended the seminar but did not sign the attendance record sheet. The project manager and the teacher were very pleased with the turn-out of the orientation seminar, as last year less than 50% of the parents attended the orientation seminar. The purpose of the seminar was to provide a program overview to help parents understand and learn more about this special enrichment class and program, and to elicit parent participation in their child's learning process. The seminar lasted about an hour and half.

From the parent activities survey form (Appendix B), the majority of the parents ranked 'Tea Party' as the least preferred activity, and hence the writer's original plan in week two of the implementation phase was altered. The writer took advantage of the skating party, sponsored by the school, held once a year at a skating rink, by inviting all the parents in this class to attend with their children. In class, the teacher offered rewards to the students who have brought parents to the skating party. Skating party information was sent home. The night before the skating party, two parents helped called other parents to remind them of this event. One of the parent telephone callers was in charge of calling all non-English speaking Hispanic parents. This parent also served as a translator during the rest of

the school year. The attendance for the skating party was amazing. Nearly all the parents from this class came with their children to the skating party. The parents as well as the students were surprised to see their teacher and principal on skates. The highlight of the evening was the teacher's spectacular fall in front of the parents, which certainly served to "broke the ice" in more ways than one. The parents now understood that even teachers make mistakes.

In the next three weeks, the class was involved in several different projects. one of the projects was a play called "The Magic Cloak." The writer wanted to see if not sending notices and not calling the parents would make a difference in the number of parents attending. The students were asked to 'tell' their parents about the play and to invite their parents to the play. Only one parent attended the play.

The writer felt that this would be a good point at which to start parent conferences. The goal was to initiate as many parent conferences as possible to increase parent involvement. The teacher called the parents on the telephone as well as sending home progress reports to report students' progress in school. The parents responded well. Not only did they attend teacher-initiated conferences, but many of the parents themselves initiated parent-teacher conferences (Appendix K). The teacher scheduled conferences at times convenient for working parents and made every effort to

arrange the meetings when everyone was available. At the conferences, parents were presented with samples of their child's work. The teacher was proud to show the parents their child's work products such as: art work, science projects, and social studies projects. The teacher was impressed by two of the parents who told the teacher that they had taken time off from their job, without pay, just to attend the conference. Some parents were asked to attend conferences because their child was doing well and the teacher wanted to provide additional guidance. Some parents attended the conferences just to talk about their child's special abilities and talents. At the conferences, the parents and teacher made decisions about what, if anything needed to be done to help their child (Appendix K). The decisions included: homework assistance, encouraging positive behavior, paying special attention to their child's interests and capabilities, tutoring, receiving assistance by the school counselor or other school staff, and methods of communicating students' progress. The teacher always made sure that before ending a conference, parents were clear and in agreement on what needed to be done and how to start. The parents and the teacher stayed in touch in a continuing dialogue about the child's progress through telephone conferences or school-based conferences.

The school-and PTA-sponsored Spaghetti Supper social event was aother occasion for parents and teachers to get acquainted. Although this was not the time to try to solve

any problems, parents took the opportunity to inquire about their child's progress in school. The parents were encouraged to join the PTA and do volunteer work in the classroom.

It was also during this period that the writer invited a reporter to our class to talk to the students. The reporter was so impressed that she decided to write an article about the class. The day after the article appeared in the newspaper (Appendix R), the teacher received numerous phone calls from parents, wanting to congratulate the students and to volunteer to do something for the class. The parents later volunteered in different capacities. Some donated time and materials to make costumes for our class play; some brought fruit from their yards; some helped prepared students for academic competitions; some brought in ethnic food and donated games. One parent heard that we needed scenery for our play and donated four large plants. The parents of this fourth grade special enrichment class became concerned parents who wanted to be totally involved in their children's educational process, as a result of the enthusiasm and class spirit generated by the favorable publicity received.

During week 6 of the implementation, parents were invited to attend a follow-up seminar (Appendix M). Again, the teacher used parent volunteers to call all parents, including Spanish-speaking parents. The teacher also prepared a play for the students to present to the parents at

the seminar. The purpose of the play was to get the parents involved in the preparation process, by preparing costumes and helping their child memorize lines. The play also taught educational values and promoted self-confidence in the children, all of whom took part in the play. The actors and actresses were all dressed in the uniform of their career choice 20 years from now. We had students who wanted to be football stars, architects, lawyers and doctors. The parents were very impressed with the play. Most importantly, they took part in the play and showed pride by viewing the end results. The remainder of the seminar concentrated on updating program information for the parents. We had 100% parent participation at the follow-up informational seminar (Appendix J).

During week 8 to 11, the parents responded enthusiastically on the checklist for parents (Appendix O). The teacher used the checklist as a guideline to conduct parent workshops. Since some parents of this class were intimidated by the word 'seminar' or 'workshop', the teacher tried something different for this parent workshop. Small groups of parents were invited by telephone to the school before school started in the morning. The parents were told that this was a parent-teacher conference with two or three parents attending at the same time. The writer was surprised by many outspoken parents who shared many valuable experiences and opinions during this workshop.

The workshop focused on suggestions for the parents. A controversial topic was homework. Some parents wanted their children to have it. Other parents complained that their children had too much of it. The teacher explained that homework offers a child more opportunity to practice what he or she is learning in school. It helps a child understand difficult ideas by reinforcing them at home. It adds variation, extension, and enrichment to related material presented in the classroom. And it gives a child a chance to assume responsibility for a part of his learning experience. The parents were very receptive. Most of them understood that homework is not busy work or punishment. The teacher suggested some ways for the parents to help with their child's homework curriculum such as: posted homework schedules, checklists, and rewards. The teacher also emphasized building confidence. She asked the parents to be interested in everything their child had to say about what he or she did, and to point out to their child all things big and small that he or she did well. A child who has self-confidence learns more easily.

After the workshop, many parents called the teacher wanting advice on different issues. Some parents even wanted to know if their method of punishment was correct. There were many parent-teacher conferences during this period as well.

The final opportunity for parent participation was the

school's Awards Day ceremony. The teacher made an effort to spread out the awards across the class so that 80% of the students received some kind of award. The parents were notified twice by telephone calls two weeks prior to, and a day before the awards ceremony. Twelve parents were told that their children would receive an award and were asked to keep this a secret from their children. The parents of the three students who did not receive awards, were invited to attend our year-end party after the awards ceremony. All the parents of the students who received awards as well as two other parents came to the awards ceremony and the party.

Some parents told the writer that this class felt like a family. They had never had so much contact with the school, and being involved with their child's school made them feel proud and enthusiastic. They wanted to thank the writer for providing opportunities for them to get involved.

Chapter V: Results, Conclusions and Recommendations

Results

Through the use of parent and community resources, parent letters, classroom incentive and competition, media and the telephone, the writer has increased parent participation in a fourth grade special enrichment class. The writer successfully implemented plans to get all the parents in this class to respond on the parent survey forms, get them to attend seminars and involve them in our school and classroom activities for the purpose of improving parental involvement in this fourth grade special enrichment class.

The writer's plan and goal to have at least 80% to 90% of the parents responding on the activities and attendance survey forms were definitely and successfully achieved since 100 % of the parents filled out and returned their survey forms. The writer tabulated the number of survey forms received. Out of 15 forms sent out, 15 forms have been received.

The parent survey contained a checklist to enlist parent volunteers. It served to acquaint the teacher with the various talents of the parents, so that the teacher could subsequently request their assistance and cooperation with class and school projects.

The writer used the Teacher Evaluation Instrument (Appendix H) to rank parent activities preferences. After compiling parent responses, the raw data has been converted into percentages for ease of understanding. The percentage was derived by dividing the number of parent participants by the total number of parents, then multiplying by 100. Out of 8 activities from which to choose, 26% of the parents ranked 'Students' Play' as their first choice, however 20% of the other parents checked 'students' Play' as their preferred activity without giving it a rank. Therefore, the writer has assumed that 46% of the parents chose 'Students' Play' as their most interested activity. The second choice of activity preferred by the parents was 'Academic Games,' followed by 'Science Exhibit,' 'Attend Seminars,' 'Music Program,' 'Art Exhibit,' 'Art Demonstration,' and 'Tea Party,' as choices 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 respectively.

At the orientation and the follow-up seminars, the writer hoped to have 80% to 90% parent attendance. After the writer tabulated the names on the seminars' attendance record sheet, 70% of the parents' names appeared on the orientation seminar attendance record sheet and 100% of the parents' names appeared on the follow-up seminar attendance record sheet. However, the actual attendance at the orientation seminar was well over 80%. Some of the parents forgot to sign the attendance record sheet. The attendance by these parents can be confirmed by the number of parent questionnaires filled out by the parents at the seminar.

Therefore, this objective was achieved. The follow-up information seminar was a total success. We had 100% parent participation. The main purpose of the orientation and the follow-up seminars was to provide updated information on the special enrichment class and to enlist parental participation in their child's learning process.

The writer's third objective was to have parents sign up to serve in eight out of ten school and classroom activities. The results of this objective can be easily detected by reading the Teacher Evaluation Instrument for parent volunteer survey. On the volunteer survey sign-up sheet, there were 23 activities and all 23 activities were signed by one or more parents as volunteers (Appendix I). The writer was surprised by the number of parents who signed up to serve and help plan holiday parties and to make and design costumes for our class plays. The result of the parent activities survey was significant. It helped the teacher in deciding which classroom and school activities the teacher should continue to have and what type of activities to center upon in order to elicit parent participation. The result of the third objective can be identified as very successful as 100% of the school and classroom activities had parent volunteers signed up to serve. Furthermore, the teacher evaluation instrument of field trip parent volunteers showed 66% of the parents signed up to serve as chaperons or drivers. The writer was very proud of the success of the parent involvement plan. It changed whatever negative attitudes

toward school parents might have, enhanced their knowledge of educational and developmental matters such as: policies, goals, behavior pattern and homework curriculum. The children whose parents were involved had a positive attitude toward learning. Their school work, attendance and discipline showed a gainful improvement. Discipline problems in the class diminished.

The Teacher Evaluation Instrument, the parent volunteer survey indicated that parents 7, 10, 11, and 13 did not choose any activities in which to participate. At first, the teacher thought that these parents just did not care. After conferencing with these parents, however, the teacher found out how wrong she had been. The parents did care, and they let the teacher know it when she tried to get them involved in the education of their children. They agreed to monitor their children's behavior and showed support during the parent-teacher conference. Although it was difficult to tell which parent signed up to serve on the parent volunteer survey form, the teacher did check on this, and found that 86% of the mothers volunteered to serve in class and school activities while 14% of the fathers has signed up to serve. However, 40% of the students in this class residing in a single parent environment might be the contributing factor to the high 'mother' involvement.

The teacher held numerous formal and informal individual parent-teacher conferences with all of the parents during the

12-week implementation period. A record was kept of the number of conferences occurring during this time. The record showed an average of 8 parent-teacher conferences per family, with as little as 1 to as many as 27 conferences per family. 60% of the conferences were mother-teacher conferences that took place in the early morning before school started or in the afternoon when school was out. The duration of the conferences ranged from 15 minutes to more than an hour. The content of the conferences ranged from informing the teacher of any family problems that could affect the child's behavior (such as fasting) to the special interests of the child. The parents may have been the key to a child's success by telling the teacher about his or her interests, because the teacher could use that information as a way of helping the child to shine and to be successful.

The parent workshop was another success since 80% of the parents attended the workshop. Parents 4, 5, and 11 did not attend the workshop, but attended parent-teacher conferences. Parents 5 and 11 never participated in any class or school activities until the implementation period of this project. Therefore, the writer was extremely pleased with the workshop results.

Conclusion

Based on the results gathered, the writer feels that it is safe to conclude that with the appropriate teacher effort parents will be involved in the school and classroom activities. The key, the writer found, was (1) persuading parents to try something, (2) finding just the right activity for parents, (3) utilizing parent resources in roles such as: translator and caller, (4) providing classroom incentive for children who help to enlist parent volunteers, (5) involving all children in activities, (6) using community resources such as: newspaper, skating rink, etc..., (7) holding positive parent teacher conferences, (8) maintaining non-biased and non-prejudiced opinions about parents, and (9) making sure that parents feel really needed. Volunteering does not mean just helping in a classroom. For this class, other types of activities are much better. We tried the following activities, and they worked.

1. Skating Party - For us, this was the beginning of much volunteer activity in the classroom. The entire family was invited to the skating rink to skate with the teacher and meet other families.
2. Parent Translator - We have a mother who is always willing to call other Spanish-speaking parents to inform them of school and class activities.
3. Classroom incentive - Rewarding children and using competitive methods to get the parents involved. Each time a

reward was given, the response in terms of participation was 100%.

Parents should be trained to directly assist in their children's education. They should have a thorough understanding of their children's program. Participation in the seminars and workshops will help to achieve these goals.

Recommendations

It is this writer's opinion that a similar parent involvement plan can be used in any classroom situation where lack of parent involvement is the issue.

For many parents, parent-teacher conferences are times of tension, fear and frustration. parents are afraid that they will hear unpleasant things about their children. They are afraid that they won't know what questions to ask or will ask "dumb" questions. They are afraid that they won't understand what the teacher is saying. Therefore the problem remains unaddressed. The writer feels that parents can reduce their anxiety by recognizing that teachers are also human beings. The teacher should make every effort to build up parents' self-confidence by asking them to speak about their line of work, assigning them to do a task for the class or inviting them to go on an outing such as our skating party. Conferences can be opportunities to develop parent-teacher partnerships that help children do their best in school. Conferences are easier and more useful when parents and teachers already know each other.

Over a 12-week period, the writer was able to get more than 80% of the parents involved in various activities.

In previous years, working parents felt left out. Children complained that their parents were not helping. So

ways were found, like baking (special ethnic food, holidays etc.), cutting out or tracing patterns, and designing games. During this 12-week implementation period, the writer also encouraged parents to help in absentia. The costume making for the play is an excellent alternative for the parents to get involved. The students and the teacher provide them with the necessary information and the parents can work on the special assigned project at their convenience before the dead-line. In our case, the parents all felt glad that they could be of some help. The teacher also encouraged the students to talk to their parents each day about what they learned in school and to say that if there are materials they would like to share with the class to enhance our lesson, they would be most welcome. Parents has sent in puzzles, games, magazines, books, small caged animals, plants, etc. The writer found that the more involved parents became, the more they appreciated the dedication of teachers and the difficulty of a teacher's job. The writer also found that children's performance improved as they realized and parents were working for their benefit.

Workshops, conferences and seminars should concentrate on the activities that are of interest to the parents. For example, our follow-up seminar was attended by 100% of the parents. This was because of the Reunion Play preseted during the seminar, which required the parents' participation as well as the children's. Parents had to be told that the help they provided was important to their children.

Seminars, workshops, and conferences should inform parents about what is basically involved in the learning process, how the resources available to them should be used, how they can reinforce basic skills, and how they can motivate and encourage their children.

The parent workshops which were attended by 80% of the parents were planned involving the parents in the process, and therefore it became their goal rather than the teacher's goal to be involved in their children's educational process. Often a workshop does not address the specific needs of a given family. Smaller workshop groups within the target population facilitate greater and more effective involvement, and provide for the inclusion of community resources and effective follow-up on problems identified as a result of the workshop.

Teachers should never forget the telephone in communicating with parents. And they should discipline themselves to make "positive" phone calls as often as possible. It is all too common for phone calls from a teacher to a parent to occur only when problems occur. The writer feels that it would be nice for parents to receive calls bringing good news such as: an invitation to attend their child's awards ceremony, or a report of excellent work or a positive behavior on the part of their child.

Dissemination

Preliminary preparations have been made to implement the writer's parent involvement program in the next year's class by sending out parent activities survey forms (Appendices F & G) and parent checklist (Appendix O) to the new parents. The writer has received 20% of the forms back. Perhaps next year with the help of the students, the teacher will get 100% of the parents to respond.

In this writer's opinion, this parent involvement program should work and is suitable for all classes. Therefore the writer plans to disseminate this project through the 9 special enrichment classes in the county and in the writer's home school.

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APPENDIX A

PARENT CONFERENCE SURVEY FORM

Please check one of the following

1._____I can attend parent conference Monday to Friday after 2:15 P.M.

2._____I can attend parent conference Monday to Friday 7:15 A.M. to 7:45 A.M.

If none of the above, please indicate your best time for conference.

The best time for me for conference is:_____

_____

APPENDIX B

ACTIVITIES SURVEY FORM

Please rank the activities according to the order of preference.

_____Attend Art Exhibit

_____Attend Art Demonstration

_____Attend Science Exhibit

_____Attend Children's own Production

_____Attend Tea Party

_____Attend Seminars (Current issues in education)

_____Attend Music Programs

_____Attend Academic Challenge contests

Please check the following areas in which you can be most helpful.

_____Class Field Trips (driver or chaperon)

_____Speaker

_____Demonstrator

_____Tutor

_____Costume Designer or maker

_____Activity Planner

_____Party Organizer

_____Fund Raiser

Please indicate time you will be available for the above mentioned activities.

APPENDIX C

ORIENTATION INFORMATIONAL SEMINAR

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGN-IN SHEET

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		

APPENDIX D

FOLLOW-UP INFORMATIONAL SEMINAR

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGN-IN SHEET

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		

APPENDIX E

TEACHER SURVEY

PARENT-WORKSHOP SIGN-UP SHEET

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

APPENDIX F

PARENT SIGN-UP SHEET FOR CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION

1. Halloween Party

2. Thanksgiving Party

3. Christmas Party

4. Speak (Dr. Martin L. King)

5. Valentine's Day Party

6. Speak (George Washington)

7. Speak (Abraham Lincoln)

8. Make Clover (St. Patrick)

9. Color Easter Eggs

10. Career Day Speaker

11. Science Fair Helper

12. Art Demonstrator

13. Poetry Bee Judge

14. Class Play Coordinator

15. Costume Designer

16. Tutor

17. Telephone Caller

18. Help With Tea Party

19. Fund Raiser For Class Field Trips

20. Design Activities For Academic Challenge Contests

APPENDIX G

FIELD TRIP DRIVER VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP SHEET

September	February
1.	1.
2.	2.
October	March
1.	1.
2.	2.
November	April
1.	1.
2.	2.
December	May
1.	1.
2.	2.
January	June
1.	1.
2.	2.

APPENDIX H

TEACHER EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

PARENT ACTIVITIES SURVEY

A=First Choice B=Second Choice C=Third Choice
D=Fourth Choice E=Fifth Choice F=Sixth Choice
G=Seventh Choice H=Eighth Choice P=Parent
- =No Selection Made *=Responded By A Check
N=Responded, But No Selections Made

Activity	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15
Art Exhibit	D	-	F	*	-	F	G	F	H	-	N	-	-	-	B
Art Demo.	E	-	E	*	-	G	F	E	G	-	N	-	-	-	H
Science Exhibit	G	-	G	*	-	A	A	D	C	-	N	*	-	-	C
Students' Play	A	-	D	*	*	B	E	A	A	-	N	*	-	-	A
Tea Party	H	-	H	-	-	H	H	H	F	-	N	-	-	-	H
Attend Seminars	F	-	B	-	-	E	C	C	E	-	N	-	*	-	D
Music Program	B	-	C	-	-	C	D	G	D	-	N	-	-	-	H
Academic Games	C	-	A	A	-	D	B	B	B	-	N	*	*	*	H

APPENDIX I

TEACHER EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

PARENT VOLUNTEER SURVEY

P=Parent Y=Signed Up To Serve
A=Halloween Party B=Thanksgiving Party C=Christmas Party
D=Speaker: Dr. King E=Valentine Party F=Speaker: Washington
G=Speaker: Lincoln H=St. Patrick's Day Art Work
I=Easter Egg Design J=Career Day Speaker K=Science Fair
L=Art Demo. M=Poetry Bee Judge N=Play Helper
O=Costume Designer P=Tutor Q=Telephone Caller R=Tea Party
S=Fund Raiser T=Design Academic Challenge Contest Activity

Activity	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15
A	Y		Y	Y		Y		Y						Y	Y
B	Y		Y			Y		Y							Y
C	Y		Y	Y		Y		Y							Y
D		Y	Y						Y						
E	Y		Y			Y									Y
F			Y						Y						Y
G			Y						Y						
H			Y			Y						Y			Y
I			Y		Y	Y		Y				Y			Y
J			Y						Y						
K			Y			Y		Y							
L			Y												
M		Y	Y			Y									
N			Y												
O	Y	Y	Y			Y			Y			Y		Y	
P			Y			Y									Y
Q			Y		Y	Y		Y	Y						Y
R			Y			Y		Y	Y						Y
S		Y	Y		Y	Y			Y						
T			Y			Y	Y								

APPENDIX J

TEACHER EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

SEMINARS AND WORSHOP ATTENDANCE RECORD

P=Parent X/X=Mom/Dad H=Present N=No Show -=Single Parent

Event	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15
Orien-tation Seminar	N	/H	H/	-/	H	-/	H	-/	H/	H/	H/	/H	H	H/	H
Follow-Up Seminar	-/	-/	-/	N	-/	H	H	H	H	H	N	H	-/	N	H
Parent Work-shop	-/	-/	-/	N	N	H	H/	H/	H/	H	N	/H	H/	H/	H
Parent/ Teacher Confer-ence	1	3	11	2	2	2	5	24	27	5	1	4	6	7	18

APPENDIX K

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE RECORD

S=School T=Telephone X/X=Mom/Dad A=15 to 30 Min.
B=30 Min. to an Hour 1=Tests 2=Student Progress
3=Information 4=Behavior H=Helpful I=Improved

	Parent	Place	Length	Reason	Result	Total # of Conferences
1.	X/-	T	A	3	H	1
2.	X/-	S	A	1, 3	H	3
3.	X/-	S	B	1-4	H, I	11
4.	X/-	S, T	A	3	I	2
5.	X/-	T	A	4	I	2
6.	X/X	S, T	A	3, 4	H, I	2
7.	X/-	S, T	A, B	2-4	H, I	5
8.	X/-	S, T	A, B	1-4	H, I	24
9.	X/-	S	A, B	1-4	H, I	27
10.	X/X	S	B	2-4	H, I	5
11.	-/X	S	A	3	H	1
12.	X/X	S	A	2-3	H	4
13.	X/-	S, T	A	1-3	H	6
14.	X/X	S, T	A, B	1-3	H, I	7
15.	X/X	S, T	A, B	1-4	H, I	18

APPENDIX L

OUTLINE FOR THE ORIENTATION INFORMATIONAL SEMINAR

1. Welcome parents

2. Brief discussion of teacher's background and role

3. Program overview
   a. History of program
   b. Funding source
   c. Program expectation

4. Teacher expectations
   a. Homework
   b. Classwork and class performance

5. Teacher enlisting cooperation of parents
   a. Special children need special attention
   b. Home projects

APPENDIX M

OUTLINE FOR THE FOLLOW-UP INFORMATIONAL SEMINAR

1. Program advantages

2. Teacher report on student performance

3. Progress reports

4. Homework and classwork expectations
   a. Teacher's role
   b. Parent's role

5. Year end I.Q. testing
   a. Distribution of scores
   b. Interpretation of scores

6. Program field trips
   a. Field trip learning experiences
   b. Drivers needed

7. Children's play
   a. Parent participation
   b. Costumes
   c. Date and time

8. Questions and answers

APPENDIX N

OUTLINE FOR THE PARENT WORKSHOP

1. Fill out parent checklist (Appendix M) for learning at home and at school
2. Analyzing data on the parent checklist for parents
3. How children learn
4. Effective learning methods for children
5. How parents can help their children at home
6. How parents can be involved in school

APPENDIX O

CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS:

LEARNING AT HOME

1.	I avoid comparing my child to others.	Yes	No
2.	I praise my child.	Yes	No
3.	I emphasize that my child is important.	Yes	No
4.	I accept my child as he or she is.	Yes	No
5.	I make my child feel useful.	Yes	No
6.	I encourage my child to try new things.	Yes	No
7.	I talk with my child.	Yes	No
8.	I listen to my child.	Yes	No
9.	I respect my child's opinion.	Yes	No
10.	I read to my child.	Yes	No
11.	I let my child make his/her own decisions.	Yes	No
12.	I take my child to the library.	Yes	No
13.	My child often sees me reading.	Yes	No
14.	I choose toys that will help my child learn.	Yes	No
15.	My child and I play together.	Yes	No
16.	I teach my child respect for other people and property.	Yes	No
17.	I teach my child manners.	Yes	No
18.	I praise my child for using good manners.	Yes	No

SCHOOL-RELATED

1.	My child attends school regularly.	Yes	No
2.	My child arrives at school on time.	Yes	No
3.	I notify the school if my child will be absent and why.	Yes	No
4.	I encourage my child to find out about and make up schoolwork that may have been missed.	Yes	No
5.	My child gets the rest and food he or she needs at this age.	Yes	No
6.	I know the basic school requirements and policies regarding learning, behavior, and attendance.	Yes	No
7.	I visit my child's school.	Yes	No
8.	I know the name of my child's teacher and make it a point to talk with her.	Yes	No
9.	I know the principal.	Yes	No
10.	My child has a place to study at home.	Yes	No
11.	My child's study area is away from the television.	Yes	No
12.	I know what my child is doing in school.	Yes	No
13.	I check papers that come home.	Yes	No
14.	I supervise homework, without doing it myself.	Yes	No
15.	I read the school newsletter.	Yes	No
16.	I have conferences with my child's teacher.	Yes	No
17.	I volunteer at my child's school.	Yes	No
18.	I attend parent meetings.	Yes	No
19.	I am a member of the school's parent-teacher association.		

APPENDIX P

TEACHER EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

FIELD TRIP PARENT VOLUNTEERS

P=Parent *=Signed Up To Drive X/X=Mom/Dad

Month	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15
January	*/		*/				*/	*/			*/				*/*
February		*/	*/					*/			*/				*/*
March			*/				*/	*/			*/				*/*
April			*/			*/*		*/			8/				*/*
May			*/					*/			*/			*/*	*/*
June			*/					*/			*/				*/*
July			*/					*/			*/				*/*
August			*/					*/			*/				*/*
September			*/					*/			*/	*/*			*/*
October		*/	*/					*/			*/			*/*	*/*
November		*/	*/					*/			*/				*/*
December		*/	*/					*/			*/			*/*	*/*

APPENDIX 4

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

PAGE 18B, MONDAY PAPER, MAY 8,1989

People Talk ...

(Continued from page 5B)

Angie (Hui Fang Huang) S's class for the potentially gifted at P G Elementary in D B has been inviting community members to share expertise as students explore potential careers.

Several class members already have career goals, which impressed the news writer who suggested journalism careers. **F G** , has set sights on becoming a judge, while **E C** , **S W** and **N Q** all choose the law. **K G** and **T I** both look forward to becoming pediatricians, which the fourth graders spelled correctly with no consultation as they enthusiastically filled out pages of information about themselves and their enjoyment of the class for me during a brief visit.

J M sees herself as a teacher, while award-winning artist **L (L.D.) M** has a career interest and the shoulders for a slot on a professional football squad. **T Y** , whose current energies go into skateboarding, loves math and will use it somehow in his life's vocation. **E M** is another math-loving student, who not only has selected a career but a company; he expects to work in computers for I.B.M.

Many of the students, including **S Z** , consider themselves lucky to spend time each day doing Structure of Intellect program exercises and creative problem solving with the inspiration of Mrs. Su and **J. L** , their aide. The students were anxious to say how much they enjoyed their field trips to do research.

Not too surprisingly, the class merits notice in the U.S. Department of Education's National Education report. They also compete against high school students in the Youth Bowl computer-use skills contest and have a grant to extend the joy with a summer camp experience.

The puzzle of the day on the board involved Morse code, with the next day's wordsearch puzzle set in French. Class rules involve cooperation and caring, and the rules were followed while I was there. It was a pleasure to visit the happy, productive and calm classroom. It was also a stretch of my imagination and knowledge to provide answers worthy of the good questions I was asked about news coverage, such as "what do newpapers do when they don't want to run an ad about something," and "what can you say when you are writing about a public person who has or might have done something illegal?" Fourth-grade, expanding minds.

□□□